

Matthew 13:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Analysis

When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not (μὴ συνιέντος)—*sunīēmi* means 'to bring together, comprehend.' Without understanding, hearing is useless. **The wicked one** (ὁ πονηρός)—Satan, the evil one—**catcheth away that which was sown in his heart** (ἁρπάζει)—*harpazō* means 'to seize, snatch violently, steal.' Like birds devouring exposed seed on a hardened path, Satan rapidly removes the gospel before it can take root.

Seed by the way side (παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν)—the packed-down pathway through the field where foot traffic has hardened soil into impenetrable surface. This represents hearts hardened by sin, tradition, pride, or indifference—gospel truth cannot penetrate, so Satan easily removes it. The urgency: immediate Satanic opposition to every gospel presentation.

Historical Context

Palestinian paths through grain fields were public rights-of-way (Matthew 12:1), trampled hard by constant traffic. Birds would immediately consume seed on these paths before plowing could cover it. Spiritually, this describes Jewish religious leaders whose traditions had hardened hearts against Jesus (Matthew 15:1-9), and Gentiles whose pagan practices had similarly calloused consciences.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What hardens hearts into 'pathways'—what makes people impervious to the gospel?
2. How does Satan 'catch away' the word—what tactics does he use immediately after gospel presentation?
3. Where might your heart be hardened to specific biblical truths you hear repeatedly but don't 'understand'?

Interlinear Text

παντὸς	ἀκούοντος	τὴν	λόγον	τὴν	βασιλείας	καὶ
When any	one heareth	that which	the word	that which	of the kingdom	and
G3956	G191	G3588	G3056	G3588	G932	G2532

μὴ	συνιέντος	ἔρχεται	τὴν	πονηρὸς	καὶ	ἄρπάζει
it not	understandeth	then cometh	that which	the wicked	and	catcheth away
G3361	G4920	G2064	G3588	G4190	G2532	G726

τὴν	σπαρεῖς	ἐν	τὴν	καρδίᾳ	αὐτοῦ	οὗτός
that which	he which received seed	in	that which	heart	his	This
G3588	G4687	G1722	G3588	G2588	G846	G3778

ἐστὶν	τὴν	παρὰ	τὴν	ὁδὸν	σπαρεῖς
is	that which	by	that which	the way side	he which received seed
G2076	G3588	G3844	G3588	G3598	G4687

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 13:38 (Kingdom): The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

Hebrews 2:1 (Parallel theme): Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

1 John 5:18 (Evil): We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

Matthew 4:23 (Kingdom): And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

1 John 3:12 (Evil): Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Romans 1:28 (Parallel theme): And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Acts 28:23 (Kingdom): And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

Acts 20:25 (Kingdom): And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

Acts 17:32 (Parallel theme): And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

Acts 18:15 (Word): But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.